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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 002617

SIPDIS

FOR T-U/S BOLTON, PM-BBODINE, NEA-A/S BURNS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/26/2013

TAGS: PREL YM KICC

SUBJECT: PASSING SECRETARY POWELL'S LETTER ON ARTICLE 98

Classified By: Ambassador Edmund J.Hull, Reasons 1.5(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) On October 25, I met one-on-one with Foreign Minister Qirbi and passed a signed copy of the Secretary's letter urging quick conclusion of an Article 98 agreement (pouched original not yet received). I also gave Qirbi the exchange of diplomatic notes agreed with Egypt redacted to eliminate mention of that country. I then reiterated Bill Burns' argument that Yemen should quickly conclude a similar agreement before attention grew in either Washington or Sanaa.

¶2. (C) Qirbi carefully read the Secretary's letter and said he would raise the issue with President Saleh. In response to Qirbi's request for clarification on various forms which agreement might take, I noted that the example I had presented had been accepted by a major Arab country and met Yemeni concerns for formal reciprocity. I urged him to focus on this model as most appropriate for Yemeni purposes.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: I will continue to track this issue personally.

HULL